1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's band or lineage and becomes a part of it only to the extent by which she enriches it with children. The more children she gives to the band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally the greater the band's interest in her. The greater her authority and that of her natal family and band, the greater the parity between man and wife in the individual family. But at all times the husband's lineage is responsible for her welfare and answerable to her own lineage in default.

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) into the community; as, for example, when a wife cannot integrate herself into her new home and returns to her own band, her husband deciding to go with her. Children may in some cases be brought up in their mother's band. These outsiders occupy a position similar to that occupied by married women in their husbands' bands; they remain members of their

[1] In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units.

[P. 176-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
592 individual family and only indirectly with that of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
[B54] only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 Her husband spends less time near the family
594 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
62 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
264 the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

[ARCHERS]

593 861 Both parents have an equal responsibility in the upbringing of their children—a frequent source of conjugal dispute. Children are expected to respect their parents and are severely criticized, or even ostracized, if they do not conform. Schebesta (1948, 323) quotes the case of a son who lifted his hand against his father who drew his bow and arrow and threatened to kill him; the group forced the son to leave the camp with his family.

606 Restrictions on relations between affines such as a mother-in-law and her son-in-law, or a father-in-law and daughter-in-law, are known to the archers, and practiced to a certain extent among those in the north, but are largely ignored by others in the southeast. The restrictions may amount to total avoidance.

Daily Life

512 The main essence of the daily routine has already been covered. It is primarily concerned with food. The archer women and men are allotted to gathering and hunting, respectively, 514 which occupy most of their time. Refuse from 264 the food is thrown behind the hut, and elimina- 361 tion takes place close by, two factors favoring the frequent moving of camp.

[P. 177-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [989]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [825]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.179-A] ADOLESCENCE

858 Only when children approach the age of
593 puberty does the very close family solidarity begin to weaken. Girls fall more under the influence of their mothers; boys, under that of their lineage. At this age also, the sexes are segregated for the first time. Young boys of different families cease following their mothers and sisters and group themselves to organize hunts for rats, mice, and other small slow game in the neighborhood of the camp. Tree climbing is also a favorite sport among the boys. But while the boys become more alienated from their mothers, the young girls continue to be as closely attached to them as ever, though, like the boys, they tend to group together with others of the
[861] same age (and older). During this period there is no formal training (Schebesta, 1948, 415 ff.), but boys and girls alike learn all there is to be learned by simple emulation and by assisting their parents and elders in various tasks.

882 At puberty the boys break completely away
883 from their mothers who have no more to do with them, writes Schebesta (1948, 424), than cook their meals. The adolescent girls develop their flirtatious ways, the boys develop their ability as hunters, and thus both prepare themselves for married life.

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-C]

gions most exposed to village influence. Objections to polygyny are based on economic rather than moral grounds. A further obstacle to polygyny is one-way marriage of Mbuti girls to villagers, a practice that Schebesta considers occurs with sufficient frequency to account for the gradual replacement of marriage by exchange by marriage by service or payment.

Polyandry is unknown.

The sororate, writes Schebesta (1948, 384), is usual in the wide sense of the word, and is practiced when the wife has had no children. When a man dies, his widow is not obliged to remain in his band or to remarry; she may choose for herself. But if she is childless, then her own band is obliged to make some compensation and this may influence her decision. Normally, a widow with children remains with them in her late husband's band.

Relations between husband and wife and their children are mentioned above (p. 177). It may be added here that Schebesta notes that, for the few days following the marriage, the young man is freed of any obligation to hunt and may devote his time to his bride.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

and may devote his time to his bride. He further alleges that the young couple do not exhibit their affection in public, but that one may conclude from various signs that mutual affection continues even in advanced age. Jealousy, however, often comes into the open, and women are particularly suspicious of their husbands. The usual factors leading to the disruption of a marriage are cited as disagreement over the upbringing of the children, idleness of either party, the disputatious nature of the women, or the irascibility of the men.

Sexual relations are maintained during menstruation; Schebesta mentions the fact that the only restriction is during the final stage of pregnancy and for several months following childbirth. In some regions, he adds, there is also a restriction on sexual intercourse between the husband and any woman following the birth of a child to his wife. Such a statement evidently implies an acceptance of extramarital intercourse in other regions, yet he also claims that adultery is considered as a moral transgression offending the divinity; when committed with a married woman, it is criminal. Some allowance is made for a man who cannot have relations with his wife (as during a period of sex taboo); intercourse with an unmarried woman is then generally not considered as adultery. An itching body and birth of twins are, among some

[P. 181- D]

[NET HUNTERS]

184 [P.212-A]
621 in a band of archers. Women are vital to the
476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[462] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a family. Putnam's notes do not give much information on the status of women, but it would seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

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562
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• 593
[184] The man, however, spends relatively more time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

[NET HUNTERS]

594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

• 593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
621 all other family activity takes place outside.
[571] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 216-A]

857 One of their favorite sports is fishing, for which they use small wooden floats with a piece of vine attached, similar to that described by Burrows (1898). Later they split into groups according to sex as well as age. The boys, until they are allowed to take part in the hunt itself, carry out imitation hunts around the camp.
881 Even at this age, however, and after under-
882 going the *nkumbi* initiation, they are still under
593 the authority of their mothers. Unlike the information given by Schebesta for the archers, the boys in a net-hunting band do not break completely away from their mothers until they become full hunters, which may be as much as two or more years after their *nkumbi*.

868 Education is through imitation, and both boys and girls have miniature hunting-and-gathering utensils and may, in addition, make miniature replicas of any adult possession (Fig. 45).

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

After marriage the affection between the young husband and his bride is no less open than before marriage. An estimation of any degree of affection necessarily depends on one's own attitude, but Schebesta's description of "passion" and "ardor" would hardly be applicable to the net-hunting Mbuti; "determination" would perhaps describe the situation better. Initial flirtations that lead to marriage openly change in character from relations on a purely sexual basis to a more intimate relationship of companionship, which is manifest by the way young grooms behave toward their brides and even older men to their wives.

P 593

Divorce

Divorce is achieved as informally as marriage, whether the union dissolved involves just the one or two bands. It is usually initiated, says Putnam (1948, 337), by the woman's simply packing her household goods into her basket and leaving with her children. In such a case, the sons, when old enough, return to their father and the daughters remain with their mother until married. Such a divorce may well upset the complementary marriage if it is a marriage by exchange. Such a dispute almost certainly involves the village patrons, who may finally be called upon to settle it between themselves, the patron of the happily married Mbuti making a compensatory payment to the patron claiming the return of that Mbuti's bride.

P 586

P Z [177] [571] Z [563]

[P 221-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly
578 heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
627 monial squabble may well become enlarged until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
[593] disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
[626] putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P 231-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.245-C]
mere outward expression of an inevitable relationship brought about by territorial propinquity. It would certainly seem, from both accounts, that there is no question of necessity on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits, spear falls, and other means.

SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in social life that may be attributed to differences in hunting technique, notably because of the cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the material considered in the section on Social Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be observed more directly. There is not only greater parity between the sexes among the net hunters, but also the father enters more fully into family life than among the archers. We would connect this difference with the lesser importance of the lineage among the net hunters. Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being primarily a lineage, under the authority of the

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of exogamy, this means that the "local group" is in fact the adult male community, to which are attached the wives and unmarried sisters or daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and their children (including boys up to their *nkumbi* initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.) does not deny the authority of the father in the family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source of conflict between husband and wife, but it is authority as a member of the lineage to which his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes no mention of women's associations other than individual friendship of neighbors who may work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is quite different. Among net hunters the band is primarily an economic unit. There is no such highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is vested not in any representative of the lineage but rather in the economically important and valuable members of the group. He stresses the part that women play in group discussions. Although their position may appear to be peripheral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underestimates the weight they carry in any discussion,

[P. 245-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 Among the few legends commending the good
597 mother and father, the good brother and sister,
593 only one takes the opposite approach and tells
776 of the bad mother. I include it in this section because the emphasis seems to be on the thoughtlessness of the mother rather than the trickery of the *satani*.

A Pygmy, his wife, and his child, were all asleep. In the middle of the night the child woke up and began crying. He cried and he cried. He was crying from hunger, because his mother had not fed him. At last the mother got up and gave the child a plantain. Then she went back to lie down and they all fell asleep again. A little while later the child woke up again and started crying again because he was still hungry. He cried and he cried, but his father and his mother went on sleeping.

A *satani* arrived. "Why are you crying, my child?" he asked. "I am crying because I am hungry!" replied the child. "My mother hasn't given me enough to eat and she won't wake up."

So the *satani* fixed two pots of plantains, and lots of meat. He put them on the fire to cook. When it was all ready he put the food in front of the child and the child ate, and ate, and ate. "Oh! This is good!" said the child, and he ate still more. When he finished there was still a pot of plaintains and lots more meat, so the *satani* said, "Eat some more, my child, then

[P. 263-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 263-C]

you will not wake up hungry again." So the child ate some more. 539 577

At last the child had finished all but a few plantains and a little meat. "Oh! How full I am!" he said, holding his little stomach. "I have had enough, really." But the *satani* pointed to the plantains and the meat that still remained and said, "You must eat some more, or you will surely wake up hungry!" "But I have eaten all I can, really!" said the child. "Eat!" said the *satani*. 593 776

The child took a plantain and slowly began to eat it, then suddenly BAM! He burst. The *satani* vanished. The mother and father woke with a start and saw the dead body of their little child. "Oh, what can have happened?" cried the mother. And there was much grief.

But the father knew what had happened, the mother had let the child go to bed hungry. So the next night when they lay down to sleep, the father slept only with his eyes. In the middle of the night the *satani* arrived to see if there were any more children who had been allowed to go to bed hungry, so that he could feed them until they burst. The father leapt out of his bed and seized the *satani* and cried, "You devil! You killed our son because his mother allowed him to go to bed hungry"

And the father killed the *satani* completely.

Basi

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 30

Hut Building, Epulu District, Central Ituri

462 a. Hut building is one of the few activities reserved exclusively for women, who also have
593 the right to tear the hut down as a sign of conjugal distress. Here a woman is slitting the
342 stalks of the phrynium leaves that will form the roof, being hung like tiles.
824 b. Hut building. The frame is made of young saplings, collected by men and women,
but erected by the women in a matter of minutes. The leaf "tiles" are usually hung by
462 starting at the top and working downward. The entrance to the hut is changed, often
342 several times, as the camp grows, reflecting relationships between neighbors. At lower right
824 is an Mbuti stick seat.
571
352

1,/Plate 30 appears on page 293--Analyst/

[P292]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is completed, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men, women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to follow lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping of the huts themselves.

For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lineage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bachelor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit.

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father.

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a

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particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no interest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*). Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed, four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However, if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is generally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rigorously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

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ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of friction).

There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Murmurs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when tendencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, particularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja. Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its members. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

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sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

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765 593 578 the food for the festivities, but nobody was helping him. At this point, instead of naming his wife, he named another sister, living in the same camp, and said that she had not done her part. He added, as an afterthought, that his own wife was equally responsible, and stepped down.

765 626 593 Moké took his place and began a long harangue, telling the camp that the *molimo* was nothing to play with, that it was big and it was dangerous, and it could kill you. He pointed out that there had been no singing for two days and two nights, because of rain, and that indeed the *molimo* had become empty. The men should have built a hut for the *molimo*. But even so it was bad for Baumbao to take down the baskets. These should have been kept full; an empty *molimo* basket is bad for the forest. Moké then turned to Baumbao and said, "Your wife is one of us, she belongs to this hearth; it is for you to see that she keeps the basket full." Baumbao then stalked off in a temper, and Eyalo, his sister's husband, said that Baumbao never dreamed of anything but his wife's bad cooking and the whole *molimo* was empty and he was not going to contribute to an empty *molimo*, nor was his wife.

Moké replied, "Empty or not empty, that is the *molimo* hearth and it has to be looked after as long as it is there." He left, and a number of youths began to restore the sticks that had held the baskets, and then carried the baskets around from hut to hut, collecting offerings from each one. That night there was some singing, and for the next few nights. Then the festival was brought to an end. It was noticeable, however, that Tabakali was constantly being helped by her youngest sister-in-law both in collecting food for the *molimo* basket, and in cooking it.

DISPUTES CONCERNING SEX

834 578 13. There is a great deal of latitude in any Mbuti band on the sexual behavior of its members, but there are certain things that are known to cause offense. One is the playing with the private parts of a woman in front of her kin or her husband. One morning the camp clown, Matungi, was playing in this manner with Kengé's half sister, married to Kokoyo and mother of two children. Kengé was nearby and took great offense, and said that if Matungi wanted to play with the girl elsewhere that was all right, but not in front of her brother. Matungi replied by becoming even more intimate, whereupon

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A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hundred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

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the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage.

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes.

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, even to the point of retaining favored portions of the game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut.

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan.

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed

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Everyone agreed
626 that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and
834 that her belly should not become big again until her child became
846 big.

595 One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship
593 is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of
578 Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and
626 consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense,
[201] all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed.
[522] Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

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had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

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feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided. Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the village, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

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is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of "stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain that this was what Asofalinda meant.

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While incapacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours.

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal."

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593 578 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA

578 152 A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

524 881 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, playfully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masalito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

534 562 27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

593 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipe-stem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.268]

CHAPTER 15

Principles of Organization (1)

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THE FOREST CONTEXT

While reaffirming our introductory belief that this single-band study is the first essential in the wider study of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and that such a study cannot warrant generalizations of wide or final value, some generalization is obviously called for and must now be made to provide a basis for future comparative studies. While we have, in the section on "The Forest World," outlined the nature of Mbuti activity in domestic, economic, political and religious life, insofar as it is lived by the Epulu band of net-hunters, we now have to draw this picture together in an organizational framework. Within this the principles discerned should be specific enough to explain the unity and integrity that plainly persist despite the remarkable degree of flux, and at the same time be general enough to have wider application beyond this specific situation.

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In the absence of central government it is customary to look for principles of organization in the kinship system of a society, and although the society in question does not conform to the expectations of Steward (1955) or Service (1962), and although its departure from their norm of patrilineality[1] cannot be demonstrably shown to be due to "evolution" or even to changes wrought by the influx of village cultivators, there is still much to be gained from a study of Mbuti attitudes to kinship. Embedded in their terminology, simple as it is, are attitudes expressed in behavior in all realms of their life.

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We have seen how little emphasis is placed on kinship, except at the level of the nuclear family, where there is a strong affective element between young children and parents. This is most clearly seen in the terminology of interpersonal address and reference, which is

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[1] Service was more perceptive in shifting the emphasis from lineality to locality, but his generalizations still lack substantiation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the generational type, dividing Mbuti into age levels that cut horizontally across the vertical lines of lineage. This terminology recognizes four age levels, but is misunderstood if thought of as a means of relating one generation to the next. Although *miki* can be correctly translated as "child," *apua'i* as "sibling," *eba* and *ema* as "father" and "mother," and "*tata*" as grandparent, these terms are not obligatory in address, and are used only where convenient in reference, or where it is desired to emphasize the age differential (for instance, in discussing activities specific to one age level or another). To use any one of these terms to address or refer to a person of a different generation, far from stressing kinship bonds, stresses generational separation. Even *eba* or *ema*, outside the affective nuclear-family usage, is generally a way of expressing distance, and may sometimes imply attitudes such as hostility or at least reproof.

Having stated what the terminology is, one has obviously to go further and look more closely into its actual usage, rather than be content with simple translations. In practice, the terms refer not to degrees of kinship at all, but to conditions of life: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. Of all the terms, the only one that effectively creates interpersonal bonds that are recognizable in daily life is the term *apua'i*. As with all the other terms, it is classificatory in the widest possible sense, extending even beyond bilateral connections to include equally affines or unrelated friends. Effectively, then, rather than "sibling," it should be translated "age mate." However, the English familial term is more pertinent in that it conveys something of the affection involved in the Mbuti relationship, and the intimate degree of unity.

The term *apua'i*, obviously, is used at each of the four age levels between members of that level. It is used widely, constantly, and always affectively, never with reproof or hostility. To address or refer to someone as *apua'i* is to indicate that all is "quiet" between you. Quietness (*ekimi*) is always associated with *apua'i*, whereas noise (*akami*) is invariably associated by any one age level with any of the others—that is to say, any crossing of the levels is liable to produce *akami*. The ideal state is quiet, or *ekimi*, therefore the ideal relationship is that pertaining between *apua'i*. Interlevel relationships (particularly those between adjacent levels) are spoken of not only as producing *akami* but also as being *mota*—strong, powerful, difficult, inclined to be hot, and therefore dangerous though not necessarily bad.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: "*Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 276-A]

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27. A common way of showing displeasure is to sulk, talking to no one. A young girl here keeps her back to her husband, wherever he might be, and refuses to cook his food.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-G]

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34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

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2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f*/*s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f*/*s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

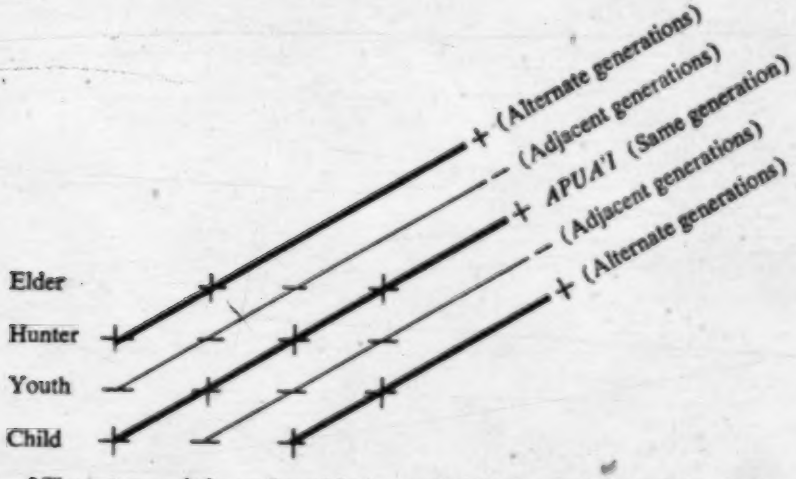
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

602 would be difficult to notice much difference in this respect between
121 *f/s* and *mb/zs*.
561
571 *b/z* and *h/w* are both positive, though *b/z* swings to negative
593 briefly at the youth's age level, friction being an inevitable potential of the sister-exchange practice, loose as it is. *m/s*, almost as uniformly positive as *h/w* throughout all changes in age level, might be said to reach a double-positive stage when *s* becomes a hunter, and is certainly pronounced during his youth—just at the time, in fact, when his relations with his father are at their worst.

If we consider the age factor we get something like the following (allowing for the fact that there is no very precise way of determining attitudes, particularly among the somewhat volatile Mbuti):

	mb/zs :	*b/z* ::	*f/s* :	*h/w*
When *s* is a child:	+	+	+	+
youth:	−	−	−	+
hunter:	−	+	−	+

602 Or, if set out in a different form, considering only age, the thick
121 lines joining positive relationships, the thin lines joining those points
561 at which the relationships are negative, we see most clearly the cor-
593 respondence of attitudes to age. Only when the sex difference is considered—i.e., allowing for negative *b/z* and positive *m/s*—is the symmetry spoiled.[2]



[2] The system, and the results, might be considerably improved by replacing the inflexible positive and negative signs with a scale analysis.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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593 578 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this 593 578 622 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonetheless concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Makubasi, one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" (*ue ke bulé*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its connotations of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubasi pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire.

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabosu's sister, but Amabosu no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off getting some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities.

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is something else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[8] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki akami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*"—"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet."

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En-

[8] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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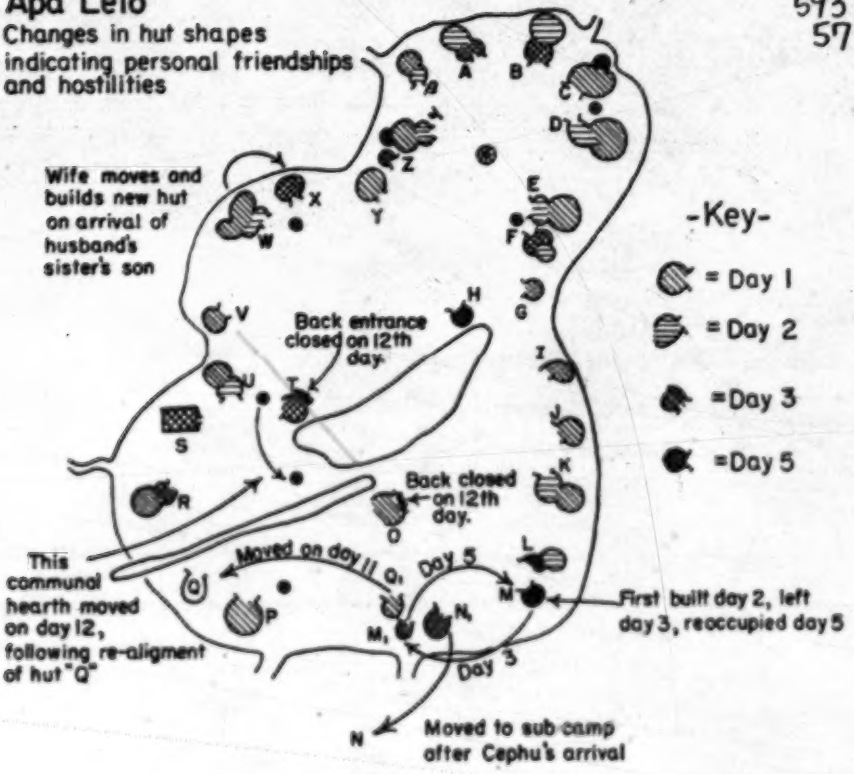
Plan 7

Apa Lelo

Changes in hut shapes indicating personal friendships and hostilities


Wife moves and builds new hut on arrival of husband's sister's son
Back entrance closed on 12th day.
Back closed on 12th day.
This communal hearth moved on day 12, following re-aligment of hut "Q"
Moved on day 11
Day 5
Day 3
First built day 2, left day 3, reoccupied day 5
Moved to sub camp after Cephu's arrival
-Key-
= Day 1
= Day 2
= Day 3
= Day 5

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and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married. If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

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each time, at the time, he never brought it up later as an issue for discussion or dispute. One morning, after two brothers, Masalito and Aberi, had been fighting, the "animal of the forest," making more noise than ever, circled all around Masalito's hut and finally pounced on it, beating on the roof and tearing off leaves and sticks. Some of the youths climbed up a tree that overhung the hut and broke off a heavy branch, which fell on the hut, blocking the entrance, but doing no real damage. The couple inside screamed their protests; then there was a sudden silence. Masalito had done the most dreadful thing of all. He had told the youths to take "that animal" away and throw it back in the water and stop all their noise. This spoiled the whole illusion, which is only a pretense in itself, that the women think that the molimo is an animal and do *not know that it is a trumpet surrounded by a lot of noisy youths.* The silence was followed by cries from all over the camp—cries of shame shouted by both men and women. The "animal" was galvanized into even greater action, and Masalito's hut was in danger of being completely destroyed. Then Njobo came sleepily out into the clearing and told the youths to go away. They had probably had their fill by then anyway, and they left, making a few last defiant noises, some in the direction of Njobo. As soon as they were gone the women came out of their huts, looked around to see how much damage had been done, then went to wash themselves and get breakfast. Children scampered around the irate Masalito as he cleared up the wreckage outside his hut, and as they danced up and down I heard one of them, bolder than the others, give a tiny hoot in imitation of the trumpet. Masalito tried to grab the child but they all ran away, laughing, to torment someone else.

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For a month I sat every evening at the kumamolimo; listening, watching, and feeling—above all, feeling. If I still had little idea of what was going on, at least I felt that air of importance and

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, *unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their* friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

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Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how everyone wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing, lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply. He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense, but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu, who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

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One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling going on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito should have taught him better. This started the argument off on different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

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happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon, Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor; they are always making jokes about one another, even about themselves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

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This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

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instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tearlessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

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his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed.

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was positively puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he

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was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he fell flat on his face.

That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

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himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health.

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

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607
593 the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself
595 and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time,
853 and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening
978 meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the
[252] baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

593 At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu
595 continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange
411 eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end,
578 Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He
607 looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

593 As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives
595 were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's
578 wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her
607 brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

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the wife was his sister he retaliated by going into his hut and dragging out Kamaikan, whom he in turn publicly smacked across *her* face. Kamaikan was made of tough stock. She picked up a log from the fire and beat her husband over the back with it. It is difficult to remember just exactly what the sequence of events was after that.

The two wives began fighting tooth and nail, quite literally. The men battled with burning logs, three or four feet long, swinging them from the cool end, but always just missing each other. Every now and again one of the girls would break free and go to the assistance of her brother, and the other would run and pull her away.

As always, a large crowd gathered—men, women and children. But nobody volunteered to stop the fight or to adjudicate in any way. They took one side or the other, either according to the rights and wrongs of the issue, or merely on the grounds that one or the other was the better fighter and more likely to win. The general opinion was that Ekianga should certainly not be sleeping with Kamaikan while she was nursing a baby, but since Kamaikan was equally at fault, Amabosu was wrong in defending her. By and large, however, the onlookers were more interested in the fight than the issue at stake.

As the fight grew more serious, and some visible damage was being done to all four parties, first relatives and then friends began to take sides more vigorously, and it looked as though fighting were going to break out all over the camp. At that moment Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, came striding out of her hut and announced in her deep contralto voice that she couldn't rest with all this noise going on, so it would have to stop. To make her impartiality quite plain she added that her animal of a husband could sleep with anyone he wanted to as far as she was concerned. She then went to where the two girls were locked together, both looking very much the worse for wear. She pulled them apart, and having given Amabosu's wife a hefty kick she took Kamaikan tenderly and led her back to her own hut.

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573 595 518 606 607 827 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout, with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amaboru ducked and it missed him. Amaboru then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 626 518 181 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 626 518 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leadership appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involving the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

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The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But the men usually know this anyway.

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass.

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility.

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great provider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator.

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286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built. Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp, since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut. Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the framework of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

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husband, and the final step, if he did not stop her, was for her to pack her few belongings and walk off, having completely demolished their home first. Then she would return to the home of her parents. It is the nature of a Pygmy never to admit he is wrong, and the husband was beginning to feel equally anxious. Things had gone too far for either of them to patch up the quarrel without being shamed in the eyes of all those who were watching to see what would happen next. He sat silent, hugging his knees, looking as miserable as his wife. Then he brightened up suddenly and turned around to see how far the demolition had gone. Only a few sticks had been pulled out. He called to his wife not to bother with the sticks, it was only the leaves that were dirty. She looked at him with a puzzled *"Ayiiiii?"*—and then, understanding, asked him to help her carry the leaves down to the stream. This they did, and together they gravely washed every single leaf and brought them back. While she joyfully put the leaves back on the hut he stoked up the fire and then went off with his bow and arrows to see if he could find some game to bring back for a special dinner.

The pretense was that she had been taking the leaves off not because she was angry, but because they were dirty and attracted ants and spiders. Nobody believed this, but everyone was glad the quarrel was over. For several days women talked politely about the insects in the leaves of their huts, and took a few leaves down to the stream to wash, as if this was a perfectly normal procedure. I have never seen it done before or since.

But apart from little excitements of this kind during the day, the camp really comes to life only when the hunt returns. Long before the first hunter appears the whole camp knows exactly who has caught what. They know partly by listening for the shouts and arm-claps of the returning hunters, which they can hear from a considerable distance, and partly because throughout the day children come and

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chief had sent his daughter to win the Pygmies, not by her gifts of plantains and manioc flour, but by winning me. The Pygmies, anxious to get what they could out of the situation, liking Amina anyway, but having some consideration for me, got Kenge to find out which of the two girls I preferred. That, evidently, was to be the limit of my choice in the matter. I confess I was glad I had chosen Amina, but I could see all sorts of difficulties arising if I were to take advantage of the situation. No doubt the chief had in mind the considerable bride-wealth he could demand should, by any chance, his daughter bear a mulatto child. Still, it was good of him to send his prettiest daughter.

I considered for a minute or two and then said, "Amina," very quietly. It had begun to rain, and I half hoped she would not hear me. It would be a terrible disgrace to her—and to me—if I turned her out, but I wanted no part of a lengthy and costly dispute over bride-wealth. But Amina was by no means asleep. She laughed lightly and made fun of my KiNgwana name, which means "the long one." So I said, "Amina!" once more, a little more sharply, still trying to think what a supposed gentleman and scholar should do in such circumstances. But Amina was not helping. She just snuggled closer and said, "Yes, tall one?" Then in a moment of inspiration I simply said, "Amina, the roof is leaking." And with masculine authority I added, "Get up and fix it."

Without a word she got up and started searching for the leak, pulling at the leaves until a steady trickle of water came down, splashing on the floor beside the bed. By the time she had repaired the damage and checked the whole roof with womanly efficiency I was asleep—at least so I pretended. With a sigh she pulled the blanket from me and also went to sleep—or perhaps she too was pretending. But it was a solution, if a chilly one. My last thoughts that night were that Kenge would at least have left me some of the

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blanket, no matter how annoyed with me he was. These villagers—they were just animals.

When I awoke in the morning I hardly dared open my eyes, but a tentative exploration proved that the other half of the bed was empty. I thought all was well after all. Amina had cut her losses and left at dawn. But when I had put my trousers on and stooped through the low entrance of the hut into the camp, there she was. She was sitting on a log beside the hut, quietly fanning the fire and cooking my breakfast, just as every other wife was doing for her husband. Kenge was making it very obvious to everyone that he was eating with the bachelors, who were making it obvious that they had not slept in my hut that night. Everyone else studiously ignored my appearance, except old Moke, who was walking past on his way to the stream to bathe. He looked at me sideways, shook his head and gave a little knowing old laugh. And as he walked on he shook his head all the more vigorously and laughed all the louder.

I was about to go after him, thinking that at least I could ask his advice, but Amina caught hold of my trouser leg and said, "There is no need for you to go to the stream to bathe. I have brought you water—behind the hut." So I went behind the hut and washed, and then sat down and had breakfast, while Amina went to join the other women and chat with them. While she was gone Kenge strolled by and elaborately asked me if the food was all right. He also asked me, rather loudly, if I had slept well. Amina answered from across the camp, "Yes, he told me to mend the leak in the roof!" This proof of domestic bliss brought howls of mirth from all around, the more infuriating because I could not see what was funny about it. Then Kenge told me that this was what men always said to their wives when they wanted to be allowed to sleep in peace.

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That night, Amina and I came to an agreement. She was to stay with me and cook my food—and mend leaks in the roof every night.

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585 Pygmy wedding the villagers shrugged their shoulders and forgot to notify Akidinimba. So on the appointed day, when the young bride-to-be had been painted and richly oiled, she set off, weeping hard, to find, when she arrived, no sign of Atete, no indication of any of the promised preparations for a wedding, and nobody who had the least idea when Atete might be back. Akidinimba brightened up at once and suggested returning to Epulu. But having got that far, her relatives decided to stay. Besides, this was Ngoma's village and they could be sure of being fed well.

585 974 An elderly village woman swept out a dark and dirty two-roomed house in the middle of the village, and told the bridal party that they could wait there. She reluctantly went to see that food was cooked for them, and word was sent out to Atete, in the forest, to return quickly before the bridal party ate up the entire village. By nightfall there was no word, but the Pygmies decided that since they were being fed so well they would stay over and see what happened the next day. They sang for a while, but things had fallen rather flat and the singing did not last long. When the others went to sleep Akidinimba was crying once again.

The next day dragged its hot and dusty way along, and still there was no sign of the groom. The bridal party began to get as restive as the villagers, but still they decided to stay. Mulanga arrived to [593] try and persuade his young wife to return with him, but she refused, saying she was not going to miss her brother's wedding for any husband. He retorted that it looked as though there was not going to be any wedding, to which she replied, "In that case you will have [583] no bride." This is one of the difficulties of sister-exchange marriage, [586] for if one marriage breaks up and the woman returns to her home, 585 the corresponding marriage also breaks up. Mulanga, alarmed at the 602 prospect, set about beating his sister, asking the unfortunate Akidi- 593 nimba why Atete did not come, as though it were her fault. He even went so far as to say that it was no wonder nobody wanted to

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marry her, the way she flirted. In other circumstances Akidinimba would have attacked her brother, for she was twice his size, but she had lost all her bounce and was so miserable by this time that she just burst into tears once more, rolling over and over on the dirty floor. The second day ended more unhappily than the first, with still no news from Atete. The messenger that had been sent out had himself not returned.

Early next morning, however, the messenger came back with several leaf bundles full of honey, and announced that Atete was on his way and would be arriving soon. Villagers and Pygmies alike began making preparations feverishly, but by the time Atete arrived it was too late to do more than have a dance, and the actual wedding was postponed for yet another day. By this time the villagers were thoroughly tired of having to feed a large wedding party for so long, and they went through the ritual just as fast as they could. The wedding began in the morning, and Akidinimba cheered up immensely when someone pointed out to her that it is better to be married than to be jilted, particularly when you are all dressed for the wedding. She laughed and giggled all the time an old village woman was telling her, as custom demands, how to behave toward her husband, what a serious business this was, and how she would be struck dead if she did not adhere to the rules. Finally the old woman gave up and just pushed her into the bridal house, where Atete was waiting, and slammed the door on them. Shortly afterward a rather subdued Akidinimba emerged, and began cooking her husband's supper.

There was a great deal of speculation among the Pygmies as to whether or not this union would last, but it was settled when one day Atete arrived and presented his in-laws with a fine sondu antelope. He said that he was very content with his wife, and he had not found it necessary to beat her at all often.

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used

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P 583 829 177 Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields C 583 462 who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere P 583 462 producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to [581] build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to P [601] almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and [561] this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 177 186 Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it C 563 particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two 583 Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 • 593 He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

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THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

Kenge's decision came almost as much as a surprise to her as it did to the rest of us, as he was as notorious as Akidinimba for being a confirmed flirt. In fact, most people thought he would marry Biyo, Tungana's daughter. But Kenge said no, Tungana was almost like a relative to him, and it would be incest to marry his daughter. People pointed out that this had not stopped him from sleeping with Biyo, but Kenge maintained that the two situations were totally different. Anyway, he had set his heart on Maliamo, and she had set her heart on him.

The situation dragged on for so long that Kenge began to see rather more of Maliamo than was allowed by customary flirtation, and people began to whisper. This drove him to take more desperate measures with his sister.

One morning the village camp was awakened to the sound of terrified screaming from the house directly opposite mine, where Yambabo was sleeping. I looked out of my window and saw Kenge dragging his sister out of the hut by one arm, pulling her over the ground and shouting to the camp that she was no good and should be killed. He pointed to her breasts and said that she had enough milk to feed a dozen children, why did she refuse to marry? Yambabo was as strong as a buffalo, he continued, so why did she refuse to work? He then gave what he considered could be the only reason, which was extremely personal and uncomplimentary. Yambabo tried to get to her feet to hit him, but every time she began struggling he simply thumped her on the back with his fist, still keeping a tight hold of her with his other hand.

People came sleepily out of their huts to watch, all rather agreeing that Yambabo really should have married long ago and deserved a brotherly beating. Encouraged by this, Kenge began kicking her, and she responded by biting him in the leg. Moke tried to intervene, but it was no good. Kenge was ready for murder, and by the time he had finished with Yambabo she was a sorry sight, scratched and

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bleeding, with one eye swollen. And still she refused to marry Taphu.

From that morning on, we all accepted the fact that Kenge was going to continue beating his sister until she gave in, and it was just a question of how long she could hold out. One day, when her brother had been particularly bad-tempered with her she ran away to their mother's home, many miles to the east. I asked Kenge if he was going to follow her, but he shook his head. He said, "Our mother will beat her much more severely than I. She knows that Yambabo loves Taphu but is too lazy to get married. All she wants to do is to sleep with him. She is as bad as Akidinimba." And so he stayed, sitting by the fire all day in a sulk, leaving me to cook my own food and his.

That evening the old men discussed the case by the central fire, with the women throwing in remarks from the huts all around. They were unanimous in believing that Kenge had done the only thing he could have done. Perhaps he should have beaten her harder, Tungana said, for some girls like being beaten. And after all, it was not as though he had chosen her husband as the villagers do, sometimes forcing a young girl to marry an old and ugly man merely because he can pay more bride-wealth than a younger man. Everyone knew that Taphu loved Yambabo as much as she loved him. He had asked her to marry him half a dozen times at least and was constantly giving little presents of meat and honey to her mother.

The next morning, shortly after dawn, I heard loud weeping and saw a bedraggled Yambabo being marched into the camp by her irate mother, Badorinji. Kenge was wandering about searching for firewood, but he hardly even looked up. He just muttered, "Now you will see, I did not beat her for myself alone."

Badorinji led her daughter by the wrist into the middle of the little village. She called out in her loud, musical voice that her son had always been a good son, a father to his sisters ever since their

own father had died, and a man to her. And now that he wanted to have a wife of his own she had made him a hunting net, but what did this worthless girl do? She gave Yambabo a hefty slap. Yambabo, however, had lost all her fight and could only whimper. When she had reached her mother's village she had promptly been turned around and made to walk all the way back, right through the night. Badorinji continued, telling everyone that her daughter had been a no good right from the start; all she liked doing was eating, sleeping, and going with boys. She would do no work, and she had refused Taphu, who loved her, many, many times. Then Badorinji ended with a masterpiece of statesmanship. She said that she would betroth her youngest daughter to Taphu, which would allow Kenge to marry Maliamo, and that she would have nothing further to do with Yambabo. Yambabo would lose Taphu, and without her mother's help she would never be able to make a respectable marriage, for she had no other brothers. She could find someone to marry her, but unless a girl were given in exchange for her she would have no status and no security. Only her mother or Kenge could give her away and receive a girl in exchange.

Yambabo let out a cry of protest at this. She said that she was tired and wanted to lie down, and why did everyone shout at her. Her mother slapped her once more and asked her if she would marry Taphu or not. Yambabo, with a final wail of protest that everyone had treated her so badly that she would surely die, gave up the battle and said that she would marry Taphu, or anyone else for that matter.

For the first time Kenge stopped trying to pretend that he was not listening to what was going on. He called a young boy and told him to run to Babama village with the news, and to tell them to get ready to receive Yambabo's wedding party. He added, hopefully, "And tell Maliamo that she is my wife now and I want her to come here at once and cook my meals for me. I am too busy to go and collect her."

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593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the villagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good exchange-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an elephant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her broth-

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